

Conveyor of the Controversial

Publisher Lyle Stuart's Business Is the Books Others Won't Touch

By Joseph McLellan

"Money," says Lyle Stuart, his nose wrinkling slightly in distaste above the luxuriant mustache and beard. "I don't care that much about money."

"I turned down a \$70,000 bid for serial rights to 'Jackie Oh!' from The National Enquirer to take a \$30,000 bid from the Ladies' Home Journal. I just didn't think it was a National Enquirer kind of book."

Publisher Stuart is the man who brought you such goodies as "The Sensuous Woman," "The Last Chance Diet," "Naked Came the Stranger" and "The Anarchist Cookbook." His small firm in Secaucus, N.J., has been associated in the public mind with controversial books that make big money, and he is currently struggling with another kind of controversy. The Justice Department is investigating ways to stop the publication of "Dirty

Work," a book about the CIA that "blows the whistle on 850 agents," according to advance publicity.

Stuart and former CIA agent Philip Agee, who wrote the foreword to "Dirty Work," may face espionage charges and/or a civil suit to stop publication of the book. If it brings Stuart back into a courtroom, he will not come as a stranger. He got the money that allowed him to start as a publisher in a lawsuit, and he has been in and out of court frequently since then, fighting charges that range from obscenity to libel against King Farouk.

The \$22,000 stake on which Lyle Stuart Inc. was founded in 1956 was won in a libel suit against Walter Winchell, the culmination of a lengthy feud between the columnist and Stuart, who was at the time the editor of Mad magazine and of his own monthly expose magazine, The Independent. Angered at an attack by Winchell on singer Josephine Baker, Stuart wrote a biography called "The Secret Life of Walter Winchell," and the war was on.

Stuart's version:

It escalated when someone entered a pornography complaint against one of the companion-publications of Mad magazine, and the police came to the publishing office. Because publisher William Gaines was worried about being dragged off by the police, Stuart agreed to go instead. The case

was quickly dismissed by a magistrate, but that was not the end of it.

According to the publisher, Winchell got a garbled version of the story and announced on his radio program: "Attention, all booksellers: Anyone selling the filth of Lyle Stuart will be subject to the same arrest."

"When I heard that," says Stuart, "I smelled money."

The \$22,000 settlement, as Stuart remembers it, came quickly after Winchell was heard in court calling Stuart a "son of a bitch." Part of it went to finance the first book he published, a book on health called "The Pulse Test."

"I published that book because I believed in it," Stuart says, "and nobody else would publish it. I didn't want to be a book publisher. I still don't." The round face broadens into an innocent smile—the victim of circumstance accepting his fate. "It just happened."

Since 1956, his basic policy has been the same; he published books that other people won't publish. Now that he has a reputation for it, the manuscripts come to him almost automatically, and so does the controversy that surrounds many of his books: "That just happens, too. I certainly don't look for it. I don't have to."

Among the other things that just happen to Lyle Stuart, whether he cares about money or not: He claims he has won a total of \$166,505 on his last 10 trips to Las Vegas. ("It's not the amount," he insists, "but the fact that I came out ahead on every one of those 10 trips"). He tells the story in "Casino Gambling for the Winner," which he wrote in three very intensive days and which is the book he really wants to talk about: "All you have to do," says the promoter, "is tell people that the book exists."

That is a characteristic of many Lyle Stuart books, from "The Anarchist Cookbook" to "The Sensuous Woman." They don't usually get good reviews (Stuart doesn't care about reviewers and sends out review copies only reluctantly), but somehow people hear about them and eventually want to buy them.

"I published 'The Anarchist Cookbook' against the wishes of everyone in my office," Stuart recalls. "I liked it, but nobody else did—and of course no other publisher would touch it. You know, it tells you how to make Molotov cocktails and blow up police stations."

"I went out on the road to promote that book, because the author was only 21 and nervous, and then I went into court to defend it. One judge in Denver announced in court that the book would be given a fair trial even though he had received a bomb threat a few days earlier."

Is there any kind of material he considers unfit to publish? "Let me put it this way," he answers. "Long ago, in partnership with Norman Mailer, I published a book called 'Jiu-Jitsu Complete.' Some of the blows in that manuscript were lethal, and I took them out."

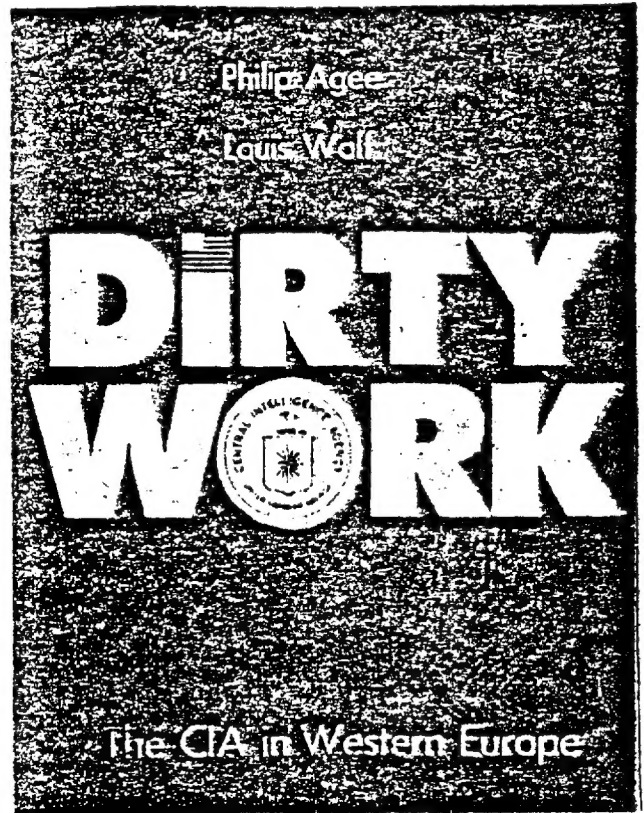
Other than books with lethal blows, Stuart says, "I try to publish books that interest me personally—I don't think I ever did a book with the idea that controversy would help to sell it. Until a few years ago, I turned down anything that I thought was commercial—anything that other publishers might be willing to do."

With "Jackie Oh!" (described in his catalogue as "the first truly intimate biography of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis"), Stuart has clearly overcome his aversion to possible commercial success. Somehow, he has fallen into similar successes with a long string of earlier titles, beginning in the '50s with the sexual liberation books of Albert Ellis and continuing through "The Sensuous Woman," "The Sensuous Man," "Captive City" (about the Mafia in Chicago), and "The Last Chance Diet."

His promotional masterpiece was perpetrated in the late '60s with a book that had one of the most perfectly resonant titles of all time: "Naked Came the Stranger," by Penelope Ashe—a novel about the wildly varied amorous adventures of a suburban housewife.

Author Ashe, blonde and svelte, proved almost as popular as the book's contents, and she made the rounds of the talk shows with a line of chatter that was both glib and sensational: "You gotta tangle your guts in those typewriter keys."

When it was revealed that Penelope was a hoax (the book was written by a group of staffers from the Long Island paper Newsday, each coauthor



Lyle Stuart, left, and one of his publishing company's latest, right. The justice department is investigating ways to prevent Stuart from publishing "Dirty Work."

being assigned a chapter), the news boosted sales even more. Ultimately, 25 people earned between \$7,000 and \$8,000 each in royalties on the book.

When he is not winning at Las Vegas or writing about it, Stuart lives quietly in Fort Lee, N.J., across the river from Manhattan and near his office in Secaucus.

His high-rise apartment is shared with Carole Livingston, an officer of the publishing house and one of his authors. Also among his writers are his son, Rory ("The World's Best Dirty Jokes"), and daughter Sandra ("The Pink Palace").

Now in his 50s and troubled by weight problems in spite of the diet books he publishes (and, he says, believes in), Stuart is hardly regarded as a heroic figure, but at least one fellow publisher sees him that way.

One who was willing to be quoted was Barney Rossett, publisher of Grove Press, whose list includes Samuel Beckett and Henry Miller, and who has had his own courtroom battles on what many critics consider a higher literary plane.

"Oddly enough," says Rossett, "it has been the small businesses in publishing that have been functioning at the edges of what is permitted. Both of us have done what we believe in, and we've also tried to do what will help us to survive.

"We don't do quite the same kind of thing; we were doing 'Lady Chatterly's Lover' and 'Tropic of Cancer' while he was doing Albert Ellis—but we ran into similar problems.

"I can empathize with Stuart, though I'm not sure I would have wanted to publish any of the books on his list. I'm glad he's there. He has made it easier for the big publishers to do things that they would not have done earlier. 'The Joy of Sex,' for example—Grove Press turned that one down, and I must say I'm sorry now."

What Stuart is trying to promote right now is a contract to publish the memoirs of Fidel Castro, who he says is a long-standing personal friend.

"I read sections of it 10 years ago in Havana—he had it translated into English—all about the time he spent in prison and how much Dostoevski meant to him. I thought it was terrific.

"Castro is very reluctant to publish—very self-effacing, you don't see his picture anywhere in Havana. He says, 'Who care what I like to eat, who I'm living with?'"

"But I'm very persistent. I'd say I have a 50-50 chance."

A Move to Head Off Blocking of Book?

CIA Agents' Names Circulated

By Jeff Stein

Special to The Washington Star

Photocopied page proofs of a new book that lists the names of hundreds of CIA officers in Western Europe were circulated over the weekend to a handful of journalists here and abroad in anticipation that the Justice Department might move to block its publication.

The book, "Dirty Work: The CIA in Western Europe," was written and edited by an ex-CIA officer, Philip Agee, and a journalist, Louis Wolf.

A 336-page appendix to the 2½-inch-thick book, a copy of which was obtained here, lists the names, career histories and, in many cases, the current positions of 841 men and women the book says are undercover CIA officers in American embassies throughout Western Europe.

The book also includes a guide for readers on how to pick out CIA officers from publicly available lists of State Department and military personnel.

A majority of the names listed, according to the authors, had previously appeared in print, mostly in left-wing European periodicals. But the authors also attribute a compilation of some names to sources in various U.S. embassies.

A CIA SPOKESMAN, Dale Peterson, said that as far as he knew, no decision had been made on whether to seek an injunction against the book's publisher, Lyle Stuart of Secaucus, N.J., to prevent its being issued later this month.

"To the best of my knowledge, the decision remains at the Justice Department at this point," Peterson said. "They were looking into the ramifications as late as Friday but no decision had been reached. . . ." Peterson added, "Obviously, we would look favorably upon any action" by the Justice Department.

A Justice Department spokesman, Robert Stevenson, said that "at this point we have not" made a decision on whether to take action on the book's publication.

Justice Department and CIA officials have expressed dismay over the impending publication, and Peterson said, "Obviously it would be very harmful" to the agency.

A SOURCE CLOSE to Agee said over the weekend, however, that anyone who took the time to learn how to thoroughly read State Department biographical lists could compile a "Who's Who" of CIA officers under cover in embassies on their own. He also said that Wolf and not Agee had done most of the research for the name lists.

"Dirty Work" also includes some 18 articles on the CIA and its operations in specific countries, including Italy, West Germany, France, Portugal and Sweden. Most were reprinted from European magazines and newspapers. An article by former State Department intelligence officer John Marks, "How to Spot a Spook," is reprinted from a 1974 issue of The Washington Monthly.

Perhaps in anticipation of a new round of attacks on their work, Agee, Wolf and the contributors devote considerable space to discussion of the murder of Richard Welch.

Welch, a career CIA officer, was assassinated in 1974 outside his home in Athens, where he was CIA station chief. A now-defunct anti-CIA magazine with which Agee was associated had printed Welch's name.



PHILIP AGEE: Once a CIA operative

"WE HOPE THAT the CIA will have the good sense to shift these people to the increasingly smaller number of safe posts, preferably to a desk inside the CIA headquarters at Langley, Va. In this way the CIA will protect the operatives named — and also the lives of their potential victims."

Since writing his 1973 book, "Inside the Company: CIA Diary," Agee has lived in several European countries and has been deported from France, West Germany, the Netherlands and England. Those nations said at the time that Agee was a menace to their national security.

A source close to the former undercover operative says he now lives in Rome.

At least five copies of "Dirty Work" were thought to have been distributed over the Labor Day weekend — two in the United States, the remainder in Europe.

Barring a court order, the book will go on sale this month at a retail price of \$24.95. Half-price copies by mail order were advertised in the first issue of "Covert Action Information Bulletin."

AGEE AND the magazine's staffers, mostly ex-military intelligence personnel, came under attack by Welch's family and then-CIA Director William Colby for printing the CIA man's name, and thus indirectly contributing to his murder, which a Greek leftist group later took credit for.

But in an article reprinted from The Washington Post, Morton Halperin wrote that Welch had been warned by the CIA itself that his residence was widely known in Athens and that he should consider moving. Welch rejected the advice.

In the new book Agee anticipated similar charges that ripping the cover off CIA officers in Europe could lead to their deaths.

"Of course, this book will again raise the cry that we are 'trying to get someone killed,'" he writes. "But as it happens, violence is not really a mystery. . . . We make it difficult for them to remain at overseas posts."

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DISTRIBUTION II The attached stories are from today's Star.

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Ex-CIA Worker Denies Selling Satellite Data

HAMMOND, Ind. (UPI) — A former CIA employee accused of selling top-secret papers describing an American spy satellite to a Soviet agent for \$3,000 has pleaded not guilty to federal espionage charges.

William T. Kampiles, 23, of Munster, Ind., was ordered to stand trial Oct. 30 by U.S. District Judge Phil McNaghy, who told defense lawyers to put in writing a request for a reduction in the defendant's \$500,000 bond.

Kampiles was returned to jail in Chicago after the court appearance yesterday.

He was indicted on six counts of espionage and theft by a federal grand jury in Hammond last month, about a week after his arrest in Chicago on a warrant issued by the Justice Department. Two of the espionage charges carry maximum penalties of life imprisonment.

The indictment identifies the stolen intelligence information only as a document entitled "KH-11 System Technical Manual," reportedly describing the "Big Bird" photographic satellite that spies on the Soviet Union from orbit.

Kampiles allegedly delivered Section 1 of the manual to a Russian agent in Athens, Greece, last Feb. 23 "with intent and reason to believe that it was to be used to the injury of the United States and to the advantage of a foreign nation."

On March 2, the indictment charged, Kampiles turned over Sections 2 through 8 of the manual to the Soviet agent. The FBI has said he sold the documents for \$3,000.

Besides the major espionage counts, Kampiles is accused of two other espionage counts and two charges of stealing government property, each carrying maximum penalties of 10 years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.